REMARKS

Applicants have studied the Office Action dated July 21, 2003and have made amendments to the claims. It is submitted that the application, as amended, is in condition for allowance. By virtue of this amendment, claims 1-14, 19, and 20 are pending. Claims 15-18 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1-14, 19, and 20 have been amended. Reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims in view of the above amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kobayashi. Claims 15-18 have been canceled so, with respect to these claims, this rejection is moot. With respect to claims 1-14, 19, and 20, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1, 10 and 13, from which claims 2-9, claims 11 and 12, and claims 14 and 19 depend, respectively, have been amended in order to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the Applicants' invention.

Independent claims 1, 10, and 13 have been amended to recite separating the printed articles into multiple groups of printed articles, loading each of the groups of printed articles onto one of the carriers, and making a record for each of the groups of printed articles, with each of the records associating one of the groups of printed articles with the carrier onto which that one group is loaded.

The Kobayashi reference is directed to a manufacturing management system for controlling a surface mount technology (SMT) line to manufacture printed circuit boards, the manufacture of which has been designated. A source data management file is created from computer-aided design data for a printed circuit board. The source data management file, an inventory parts management file, a cartridge management file, and an SMT line information file, which includes manufacturing conditions of the SMT manufacturing equipment and equipment arrangement, are registered in a database.

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An SMT set-up support unit creates a set-up instruction manual, which specifies set-up for manufacturing printed circuit boards on the SMT line, by referring to the various files that have been stored in the database. Further, a mounting data creating unit creates mounting data to allow the mounting machine to mount parts on printed circuit boards, using part setting position addresses of the mounting machine contained in set-up information and part mounting position coordinates contained in the source data management file.

The Kobayashi reference, however, does not disclose reading input indicating that multiple carriers are being mounted to take up printed articles, reading in an ID of each of the carriers, separating the printed articles into multiple groups of printed articles, loading each of the groups of printed articles onto one of the carriers, and making a record for each of the groups of printed articles, with each record associating one of the groups of printed articles with the carrier onto which that one group is loaded, as recited in amended independent claims 1, 10 and 13. Therefore, amended independent claims 1, 10 and 13 distinguish over the Kobayashi reference. The Kobayashi reference does not teach, anticipate, or suggest all of the recited elements of independent claims 1, 10 and 13.
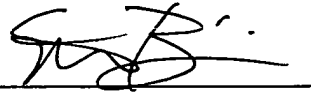
Further, because independent claims 1, 10 and 13 distinguish over the Kobayashi reference, dependant claims 2-9, claims 11 and 12, and claims 14 and 19, which depend from independent claims 1, 10 and 13, respectively, also distinguish over the Kobayashi reference. Therefore, the Kobayashi reference does not teach, anticipate or suggest all of the recited elements of dependant claims 2-9, 11, 12, 14 and 19. Therefore, the Examiner's rejection should be withdrawn and it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-14 and 19 are in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application and the claims are in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are requested.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (561) 989-9811 should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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